- The industry segments that continue to show some improvement in prices include products like beverage and tobacco, chemicals, non-ferrous metals, machinery and equipment and transport goods.

(d) Profitability is a firm level indicator of efficiency of operations. Firms at the micro level, have to improve their efficiency and competitiveness in the global market to increase their profitability. Domestic price inflation will be more in tune with the inflation in international prices, as the country integrates with the global economy. Many Indian companies have undertaken restructuring efforts, the results of which will be seen after a lag.

The Government has taken measures such as increased outlay on infrastructure to remove the bottlenecks and reduce transaction costs, liberalised Mergers and Acquisitions of Indian companies, and rationalised customs and excise duty structure, to provide an enabling environment for the firms to operate efficiently. The RBI has been moving the economy towards a lower interest rate structure to enable industry to reduce cost.

Export of rice

4262. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in "Navbharat Times" dated 12th April, 2002 under the heading "Behad kam per kiya ja raha hai achhi kism ke chavel ka niryaat"; and

(b) if so, what is Government's response thereto and what corrective steps have been taken or Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Rice was being offered for export from the Central Pool @ Rs. 5650/- PMT (raw) and Rs. 6000/- PMT (par boiled) since 26.05.01 for the Financial year 2001-02. The said rates would continue upto 10.05.02. FCI has also allowed a margin of 2%+ equivalent percentage of reduction in brokens as per Bill of Lading or 'H' form. The brokens are allowed to be sold in the domestic market.